

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 DODE-00 PM-05 L-03

NASA-02 NSC-05 ERDA-07 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 EB-08 /102 W

-----002531 010403Z /23

R 311700Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6856

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS ROME 14168

DEPT PASS NASA

PARIS FOR NASA REPRESENTATIVE

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: TSPA, IT

SUBJ: LAUNCH OF ITALIAN SATELLITE SIRIO

1. SIRIO, THE FIRST SATELLITE ENTIRELY PROJECTED, DEVELOPED AND BUILT IN ITALY, WAS LAUNCHED BY NASA AT CAPE CANAVERAL ON AUGUST 25. THIS BROUGHT TO SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION A PROJECT WHICH WAS BEGIN TEN YEARS AGO AND PLAGUED BY FINANCIAL AND BUREAUCRATIC DIFFICULTIES. WHILE THE PROJECT COST WAS ORIGINALLY ESTIMATED AT 30 BILLION LIRE IN 1969 (DLR 48 MILLION AT 625 LIRE EXCHANGE RATE), UNTIMATE COST WAS ABOUT 90 BILLION LIRE (DLR 104 AT 865 LIRE EXCHANGE RATE), OF WHICH ABOUT 40 BILLION REMAIN AS YET UNPAID.

2. GOIMINISTRIES CONCERNED WITH PROJECT, GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY AND FIRMS (LARGELY PUBLIC SECTOR) INVOLVED IN CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF SATELLITE HAVE USED OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH TO GENERATE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE OF ITALIAN SATELLITE PROGRAM. LAUNCH VIEWING VIA CLOSED CIRCUIT TV WAS ATTENDED A HEADQUARTERS OF TELESPAZIO

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(PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANY RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATION) BY MINISTERS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PEDINI, POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COLOMBO, AND STATE HOLDINGS BISAGLIA, AS WELL AS IRI (STATE INDUSTRIAL HOLDING COMPANY) PRESIDENT PETRILLI, NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL PRESIDENT QUAGLIARELLO AND MANY OTHER SCIENTISTS. EMBASSY WAS REPRESENTED BY ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL MINISTER.

3. WIDE COVERAGE GIVEN BY INFORMATION MEDIA TO SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH AND SUBSEQUENT OPERATIONS HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY FAVORABLE DESPITE QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE PAST CONCERNING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS ON SUCH PROJECT. INDEED, PRESS HAS FEATURED NUMEROUS STATEMENTS BY AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED WITH PROJECT STRESSING NECESSITY FOR SHARPLY INCREASED GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES FOR SPACE RESEARCH, IMPORTANCE OF PROJECTS SUCH AS SIRIO FOR DEVELOPMENT OF VIABLE ITALIAN TELESPEACE INDUSTRY AND BENEFITS DERIVING TO ITALY FROM THIS. IN LATTER CONNECTION, TELESPEAZIO DIRECTOR GENERAL BENIGNI HAS EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ITALY WILL BE ABLE TO PLAY GREATER ROLE IN ARAB-US-FRENCH-ITALIAN CONSORTIUM AEA, IF IT SHOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN COMPETITION AGAINST COMSAT FOR ARABSAT SATELLITE PROJECT.HOLMES

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** LAUNCH OF ITALIAN SATELLITE SIRIO  
**TAGS:** TSPA, IT  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009